AUM

That Self is indeed Brahman, consisting of knowledge, mind, life, sight, hearing, earth, water, wind, ether, light and no light desire and no desire, anger and no anger, right and wrong, and all things.—*Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad.*

THE PATH.

Vol. III. OCTOBER, 1888. No. 7.

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THE BHAGAVAD-GITA.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

In the third chapter Krishna approached the subject of Yoga—or Union with the Supreme and the method of attainment—, and now in the fourth openly speaks of it. He had told Arjuna that passion is greater than either heart or mind, having power to overthrow them, and advised Arjuna to strengthen his hold on his real self, for by means of that only could he hope to overcome passion.

In the opening of this chapter we come across something of importance—the doctrine that in the early part of a new creation, called Manwantara in Sanscrit, a great Being descends among men and imparts certain ideas and aspirations which reverberate all through the succeeding

ages until the day when the general dissolution—the night of Brahma—comes on. He says:

> "This deathless Yoga, this deep union,
> I taught Vivaswata, the Lord of Light;
> Vivaswata to Manu gave it; he
> To Ikshwáku; so passed it down the line
> Of all my Royal Rishis. Then, with years,
> The truth grew dim and perished, noble Prince!
> Now once again to thee it is declared—
> This ancient lore, this mystery supreme—
> Seeing I find thee votary and friend."

Exoteric authorities agree that Vivaswata is a name for the sun; that after him came Manu, and his son was Ikshwáku. The latter founded the line of Solar Kings, who in early times in India were men of supreme knowledge. They were adepts every one, and ruled the land as only adepts could, for the darker ages had not come on, and such great Beings could naturally live among men. Every one respected them, and there was no rebellion even in thought, since there could be no occasion for complaint. Although "Vivaswata" as a name for the sun reveals nothing to our western ears, there is a great truth hidden behind it, just as to-day there is as great a mystery behind our solar orb. He was the Being appointed to help and guide the race at its beginning. He had himself, ages before, gone through incarnation during other creations, and had mounted step-by-step up the long ladder of evolution, until by natural right he had become as a god. The same process is going on to-day, preparing some Being for similar work in ages to come. And it has gone on in the limitless past also; and always the Supreme Spirit as Krishna teaches the Being, so that he may implant those ideas necessary for our salvation.

After the race has grown sufficiently, the Being called "The Sun" leaves the spiritual succession to Manu—whether we know him by that name or another—, who carries on the work until men have arrived at the point where they furnish out of the great mass some one of their own number who is capable of founding a line of Kingly Priest Rulers; then Manu retires, leaving the succession in the hands of the Royal Sage, who transmits it to his successors. This succession lasts until the age no longer will permit, and then all things grow confused spiritually, material progress increases, and the dark age, fully come, ushers in the time before dissolution. Such is the present time.

Up to the period marked by the first earthly King called Ikshwáku, the Ruler was a spiritual Being whom all men knew to be such, for his power, glory, benevolence, and wisdom were evident. He lived an immense number of years, and taught men not only Yoga but also arts and sciences.

The ideas implanted then, having been set in motion by one who knew all the laws, remain as *inherent ideas* to this day. Thus it is seen that there is no foundation for the pride of ideas felt by so many of us. They are not original. We never would have evolved them ourselves, unaided, and had it not been for the great wisdom of these planetary spirits in the beginning of things, we would be hopelessly drifting now.

The fables in every nation and race about great personages, heroes, magicians, gods, who dwelt among them in the beginning, living long lives, are due to the causes I have outlined. And in spite of all the sneers and labored efforts of scientific scoffers to show that there is no soul, and perhaps no hereafter, the innate belief in the supreme, in heaven, hell, magic, and what not, will remain. They are preserved by the uneducated masses, who, having no scholastic theories to divert their minds, keep up what is left of the succession of ideas.

Arjuna is surprised to hear one whose birth he knew of declaring that Vivaswata was his contemporary, and so asks Krishna how that can happen. Krishna replies, asserting that he and Arjuna had had countless rebirths which he saw and recollected, but Arjuna, being not yet perfect in Yoga, knew not his births, could not remember them. As in the poem Arjuna is also called *Nara*, which means *Man*, we here have an ancient postulation of Reincarnation for all the human family in direct and unmistakeable words.

Then very naturally he opens the doctrine, well known in India, of the reappearances of Avatars. There is some little dispute among the Hindus as to what an Avatar is; that is, whether he is the Supreme Spirit itself or only a man overshadowed by the Supreme to a greater extent than other men. But all admit that the true doctrine is stated by Krishna in the words:—

> * * "I come, and go, and come. When Righteousness
> Declines, O Bharata! when Wickedness
> Is strong, I rise, from age to age, and take
> Visible shape, and move a man with men,
> Succoring the good, thrusting the evil back,
> And setting Virtue on her seat again."

These appearances among men for the purpose of restoring the equilibrium are not the same as the rule of Vivaswata and Manu first spoken of, but are the coming to earth of Avatars or Saviors. That there is a periodicity to them is stated in the words "from age to age." He is here speaking of the great cycles about which hitherto the Masters have been silent except to say that there are such great cycles. It is very generally admitted now that the cyclic law is of the highest importance in the consideration of the great questions of evolution and Man's destiny. But the coming of an Avatar must be strictly in accordance with natural law,—and

that law demands that at the time of such an event there also appears a being who represents the other pole—,for, as Krishna says, the great law of the two opposites is eternally present in the world. So we find in the history of India that, when Krishna appeared so long ago, there was also a great tyrant, a black magician named Kansa, whose wickedness equalled the goodness of Krishna. And to such a possibility the poem refers, where it says that Krishna comes when wickedness has reached a maximum development. The real meaning of this is that the bad Karma of the world goes on increasing with the lapse of the ages, producing at last a creature who is, so to say, the very flower of all the wickedness of the past, counting from the last preceding Avatar. He is not only wicked, but also wise, with magic powers of awful scope, for magic is not alone the heritage of the good. The number of magicians developed among the nations at such a time is very great, but one towers above them all, making the rest pay tribute. It is not a fairy tale but a sober truth, and the present prevalence of self-seeking and money-getting is exactly the sort of training of certain qualities that black magicians will exemplify in ages to come. Then Krishna—or howsoever named—appears "in visible shape, a man with men." His power is as great as the evil one, but he has on his side what the others have not,—spirit, preservative, conservative forces. With these he is able to engage in conflict with the black magicians, and in it is assisted by all of us who are really devoted to Brotherhood. The result is a victory for the good and destruction for the wicked. The latter lose all chance of salvation in that Manwantara, and are precipitated to the lower planes, on which they emerge at the beginning of the next new creation. So not even they are lost, and of their final salvation Krishna speaks thus :—

> "Whoso worship me,
> Them I exalt ; *but all men everywhere*
> *Shall fall into my path ;* albeit, those souls
> Which seek reward for works, make sacrifice
> Now, to the lower gods."

He also declares that the right and full comprehension of the mystery of his births and work on earth confers upon us Nirvana, so that rebirth occurs no more. This is because it is not possible for a man to understand the mystery unless he has completely liberated himself from the chains of passion and acquired entire concentration. He has learned to look beneath the shell of appearances that deceives the unthinking mind.

This brings us to a rock upon which many persons, theosophists as well as others, fall to pieces. It is personality. Personality is always an illusion, a false picture hiding the reality inside. No person is able to make his bodily environment correspond exactly to the best that is within him, and others therefore continually judge him by the outward show. If we

try, as Krishna directs, to find the divine in everything, we will soon learn not to judge by appearances, and if we follow the advice given in this chapter to do our duty without hope of reward and without trimming ourselves with a desired result in view, the end will be peace.

Krishna then adverts to various systems of religious practice, and shows Arjuna that they all lead at last, but after many births, to Him, by reason of the tendency set up. The different schools are taken up in a few sentences. His dictum is that they "destroy sins," meaning that a certain purification of the nature is thus accomplished, which is followed upon death by a longer stay in Devachan, but it is only to one single practice he awards the distinction of being that which will bring about union with the Supreme Spirit. After enumerating all, not only the performance but also the omitting of sacrifice, he shows Arjuna that spiritual knowledge includes all actions and burns to ashes the binding effects of all work, conferring upon us the power to take Nirvana by reason of emancipation from the delusion that the lower self was the actor. The perfection of this spiritual knowledge is reached by strengthening faith and expelling doubt through devotion and restraint. Then occurs a verse, almost the same as one in the New Testament, "the man of doubtful mind enjoys neither this world nor the other, nor final beatitude." WILLIAM BREHON, F. T. S.

(*To be Continued.*)

TALES OF THE ANCIENT RAJPUTS.

There is an old tradition, so old that it has almost died from the memories of men, that veils eventful epochs in the archaic history of India.

The Rajputs, afterwards the Kshattriyas, or warrior caste, were, according to this legend, the aboriginal dwellers in the sacred land of India. They had strong cities and powerful dynasties, and had already grown old in the land, when a newer race came to share their inheritance. The newer race were the Brahmans, who crossed the mountains of eternal snow, the Sacred Himavat, from lake Mansarawar the divine, on whose holy shores the Lord first came to Earth and taught to the Seven Rishis the archaic wisdom. The Brahmans had dwelt long by lake Mansarawar ; they had learned the secret wisdom from the glowing lips of the children of the Fire-Mist in the Sacred Island.

Their lore was holy ; its end was the attainment of spiritual bliss. But the Rajputs, the early dwellers in the land, had learned the darker lore, which bent to their power those subtle and tremendous forces which Nature

ever seeks to keep concealed. And the Brahmans came to the Rajputs to learn their wisdom ; for the Brahmans were then the pupils of the Rajputs.

Such is the old legend, which Echo has almost forgotten to whisper along the corridors of Time.

But in the Sacred Books of India are still found traces of the time when the Rajputs were greater than the Brahmans, and the Brahmans sat at their feet to learn their wisdom.

These two races have doubtless changed but little since that archaic time, ages ago .

Doubtless even then the Rajputs were, as they are now, "bronze-cheeked, large-limbed, leisure-loving" ; while the Brahman was, as now, "tall and slim, with finely modelled lips and nose, fair complexion, and high forehead." But the Rajputs have lost that superiority which the Brahmans have gained.

The Sacred Books of India still preserve traces of Rajput supremacy in might and wisdom, and a few stories from the Scriptures to illustrate this may be collected here. The first is from the Kaushitaki Brahmana Upanishad ; it is as follows : [1]

There was a certain Gargya Balaki, learned in the holy Vedas. He dwelt among the Matsyas, the Kurus, and the Videha. This Brahman, coming once to Raja Ajatasatru, a royal Rajput, addressed him thus : "Let me declare to thee divine knowledge, oh king ! " The king replied, "We bestow a thousand cows on thee, oh Brahman, for this word of thine." The Brahman, deeply versed in the Vedas, then expounded the doctrines of his religion. But though the Brahman was wise, the Rajput king was wiser than he ; and in all things it was seen that the sacred wisdom of the Rajput was greater than the love of the Brahman. Finally the royal Rajput Ajatasatru, perceiving himself to be more wise, thus addressed the Brahman : "Dost thou know only so much, oh Balaki ?" "Only so much," he replied. The king rejoined, "Thou hast vainly proposed to me ; let me teach thee divine knowledge."

Then the Son of Balaka approached the king with fuel in his hand and said, "Let me attend thee as thy pupil." The king replied, "Contrary to rule is it that a Kshattriya should initiate a Brahman in divine knowledge ; nevertheless, approach, I will make thee to know the divine wisdom." The King, taking him by the hand, departed.

Another story is from the Chandogya Upanishad.

Svetaketu came to the assembly of the Panchalas : Pravahana Jaivali asked him, "Youth, has thy father instructed thee ?" "He has, sire," replied Svetaketu. "Dost thou know," asked the King, "whither living

1 This, and the quotations that follow, are not literal translations, but summaries of the Sanskrit text.

creatures go, when they depart hence?" "No, sire." "Dost thou know how they return?" "No, sire." "Dost thou know," again asked the king, "the divergences of the two paths whereof one leads to the gods and the other to the pitris?"[1] "No, sire." "And hast thou then said, 'I have been instructed'; for how can he who knows not these things say he has been taught?" The young man returned sorrowful to his father, and said, "Thou saidest 'I have instructed thee,' but this Rajanya (Kshattriya) proposed to me many questions which I was not able to answer."

The father replied, "If I had known the answer to these questions, would I not have told them to thee?" Gautama[2] went to the king, who received him with honor. In the morning he presented himself before the King, who said, "ask, oh reverend Gautama, a boon of human riches." He replied, "To thee, oh King, belongs wealth of that kind. Declare to me the questions thou hast asked of the youth." The King desired him to make a long stay, and at last replied, "As thou hast declared to me, Oh Gautama, that this knowledge has not formerly reached the Brahmans who lived before thee, it has therefore been among all people a wisdom taught by the Kshattriya class alone." He then declared it to him. [But the most famous of all these legends of Rajput supremacy is that which tells of the strife between Visamitra the Rajput, and Vasishta the white-robed Brahman. Many of the Rig-Veda hymns are attributed to the seership of the Vasishtas. Visvamitra is also the seer of many Vedic hymns.

In the Mahabharata is found the "ancient story of Vasishta" thus narrated: Visvamitra was the son of the Raja of Kanyakubja (Kanouj), a royal Rajput. Visvamitra, when hunting in the forest, came to the hermitage of Vasishta the Brahman, where he was received with all honor, entertained together with his followers with delicious food and drink, and presented with precious jewels and dresses obtained by the Sage from his wonder working cow, the fulfiller of all his desires.[3] The cupidity of the Rajput Visvamitra was aroused by the sight of the cow. He offered a million cows in exchange for her, but Vasishta would not part with her, even on promise of a kingdom. Visvamitra was angry; "I am a Kshattriya, a warrior," said he, "have I not more power than thou, a Brahman, whose virtue is submissiveness? I shall not abandon war, the virtue of my caste, but shall take thy cow by force."

Vasishta challenged him to show his power, and Visvamitra seized the wonder-working cow. But she, though beaten with a whip, would not be moved from the hermitage. Witnessing this, Vasishta asks her what he, a patient Brahman, could do.

1 Vide "The Secret Doctrine," for the doctrine of the lunar Pitris.

2 *Not* Gautama the Buddha, but ages earlier.

3 Called *Kamaduk*.

She asks why he overlooks the violence she suffers; Vasishta replies, "Force is the strength of Kshattriyas, patience that of the Brahmans. As patience possesses me, go if thou pleasest." The cow prays Vasishta not to abandon her; for, till he forsakes her, she cannot be taken away. Vasishta promises he will never forsake her. Hearing these words of her master, the cow tosses her head aloft and assumes a terrific aspect, her eyes become red with rage, she utters a deep, bellowing sound, and puts to flight the whole army of Visvamitra. Being again beaten with a whip, she becomes more incensed, her eyes are red with anger, her whole body, kindled by her indignation, glows like the noonday sun; she discharges firebrands, and creates bands of warriors,—Pahlavas, Dravidas, Sakas, Yavanas, Sabaras, Paundras, Sinhalas, and Kiratas; these warriors defeated Visvamitra's army, and put it to flight. Beholding this great miracle, Visvamitra was humbled at the impotence of a Kshattriya's nature, and exclaimed, "Shame on a Kshattriya's force; the might of a Brahman, this is force indeed!" Examining what is and what is not force, and ascertaining that austere fervour is the supreme force, he abandoned his prosperous kingdom and all its brilliant regal splendour, and, casting all enjoyments behind his back, he devoted himself to austerity. Having by this means attained perfection and Brahmanhood, he arrested the worlds by his fiery vigour, and disturbed them all by the blaze of his glory; and at length this Rajput drank Soma with Indra.[1]

If one is permitted to speculate on the meaning of this legend, the conjecture may be put forward that Vasishta and Visvamitra stand for the Brahman and Rajput tribes respectively, having their territories probably on the upper waters of the Indus and Ganges. For it is only since 1200 A. D. that the descendants of the Kshattriyas have dwelt in the sandy jungles of Rajputana. Visvamitra probably represents an expedition of Rajputs to the Brahman country typified by the cow of Vasishta,—a "land flowing with milk." This cow, the source of fertility, supplies a wealthy booty to the Rajput if he will consent to be bought off: but the Rajput wants the Brahman's country for himself, and the wealth offered him only stimulates his cupidity. The Brahmans refuse to give up their territory, and the Kshattriyas begin the attack. The Brahmans summon to their aid the non-aryan tribes of Dravidas, Pahlavas, and Sinhalas. By their aid the Rajputs are defeated. This is, perhaps, a not improbable interpretation of the legend.

Let us return, however, to the austerities of Visvamitra, taking up the story in the Ramayana. Visvamitra the Rajput, being utterly vanquished by Vasishta, placed his son on his throne and travelled to the Himalayas, where he betook himself to austerities and thereby obtained a vision of

1 In other words, he went to Devachan.

Mahadeva,[1] who at his desire revealed to him the science of war in all its branches and gave him celestial weapons, with which, elated and full of pride, he consumed the hermitage of Vasishta and put all its inhabitants to flight. Vasishta threatened Visvamitra, and raised on high his Brahman's mace. Visvamitra, too, raised his fiery weapon, and called to his adversary to stand. Vasishta cried out, "What comparison is there between the might of a Kshattriya and the might of a Brahman? Behold, base Kshattriya, my divine Brahmanical power." The dreadful fiery weapon, uplifted by Visvamitra, was quenched by the rod of the Brahman, as water quenches fire. Many other celestial weapons were used by Visvamitra--the discus of Vishnu, the trident of Siva, etc., but the Brahman's mace devoured them all. Finally, to the terror of the gods, the Rajput shot off the terrible Brahmastra, the weapon of Brahma. But it availed not against Vasishta the sage. Vasishta grew terrible in appearance, jets of fire issued from his body, the Brahmanical mace blazed in his hand like a smokeless mundane conflagration, or a second Sceptre of Yama, lord of death. But the devotees besought him, and his vengeance was stayed. Visvamitra cried, "Shame on a Kshattriya's strength ; the strength of a Brahman is superior."

This tale is doubtless the echo of a tremendous conflict between the Rajputs—bringing to their aid their darker magic powers and the control of the terrible occult force which they had learned from the Atlanteans of the South—and the Brahmans, strong in the holy wisdom of the Sacred Isle. At first Visvamitra's devotion only obtained for him the position of Rajarshi, a royal Rishi, while he aspired to the higher rank of Brahmarshi, —divine Rishi.

That he gained great power, however, the following story from the Mahabharata clearly shows.

King Trishanku desired to ascend alive to heaven. He came to Visvamitra to ask his aid. Visvamitra sacrificed, and addressed him thus ; "Behold, oh monarch, the power of austere fervor acquired by my own efforts. I myself, by my own power, will conduct thee to heaven. Ascend to that celestial region, difficult to attain to in an earthly body. I have surely earned some reward of my austerity." Trishanku ascended to heaven in the sight of the assembled saints Indra ordered him to be gone, and to fall to the earth. Visvamitra again exerted his power, and the king obtained a place amongst the stars.[2]

Visvamitra, still yearning for Brahmanhood, fasted and took a vow of silence. As he continued to suspend his breath, smoke issued from his head, to the great consternation and distress of the three worlds. The

1 The great God of All.

2 This has reference to a very obscure, but not the less important, doctrine "Concerning the Star-Rishis." It has to do with the selfishness and materiality of our nature, and is not explained because dangerous. It will be known, however, quite soon enough.—Ed.

gods and Rishis addressed Brahma: "The great Muni, Visvamitra, has conquered many trials, and still advances in sanctity. If his wish be not granted, he will in wrath destroy the three worlds by his austere fervor. All the regions of the universe are confounded; no light anywhere shines; all the oceans are tossed, the mountains crumble, the earth quakes, the wind blows confusedly. We cannot, oh Brahma, guarantee that mankind shall not become atheistic. Before the great and glorious sage of fiery form resolves to destroy everything, let him be propitiated." The gods, headed by Brahma, addressed Visvamitra thus: "Hail Brahmarshi! we are satisfied with thy austerities; thou hast through their intensity attained to Brahmanhood." The sage, delighted, made his obeisance to the gods, and said; "If I have obtained Brahmanhood and long life, then let the mystic syllable (*omkâra*), and the sacrificial formula, and the Vedas recognise me as a Brahman. And let Vasishta the Brahman, the greatest of those who know the Rajput knowledge and the Brahman knowledge, also recognise me." Vasishta, being propitiated by the gods, became reconciled to Visvamitra, and hailed him, though a Rajput, with the title of Brahmarshi. Visvamitra also, having attained the Brahmanical rank, paid all honor to Vasishta. Before Visvamitra thus attained the pinnacle he had longed to reach, he performed many wonders, recounted in another part of the Mahabharata.

He destroyed Vasishta's hundred sons by the power of austere fervor; when possessed by anger, he created many demons, fierce and destructive as death; he delivered the son of Richika from being offered in sacrifice; he cursed his fifty sons, and they became outcasts; he elevated Trishanku alive to heaven; he changed a troublesome nymph into a stone.

(To make the meaning of this clear, it should be explained that, when the gods had reason to dread the too great austerity of any saint, they used to send a "troublesome nymph" to disturb his orisons. Kàma the love-god, when taking part in one of these expeditions, which had for its object the destruction of Siva's *Samâdhi*, through the charms of Umâ, daughter of the Himavat, lost his body, which was turned to ashes by Siva's glances, and is thenceforth known as Ananga, the bodiless god.) Besides this, Visvamitra induced Vasishta to bind and throw himself into a river, though he emerged thence unbound. He also made himself invisible, and caused Rakshasa demons to obsess his enemies. He also incited the demon to destroy the sons of Vasishta. On hearing of the death of his sons, Vasishta supported his misfortune as the great mountain supports the earth. He meditated his own destruction, but thought not of destroying the Rajput Visvamitra. He hurled himself from the summit of Mount Meru, but fell on the rocks as if on a heap of cotton. Escaping alive from his fall, he entered a glowing fire in the forest; but the fire, though blazing fiercely,

not only failed to burn him, but seemed quite cool. He next threw himself into the sea, with a stone tied around his neck ; but the waves cast him up alive on the shore. He sought death from the Sutlej alligators, but they fled from the Brahman, seeing him brilliant as fire. Seeing that death would not receive him, he returned to his hermitage. But at last Visvamitra attained to Brahmanhood, and Vasishta was reconciled to him. How many other Brahmans came to the feet of the Kshattriyas to learn wisdom, and how the Kshattriyas triumphed over the Rajputs, and how Parasurama made a mighty slaughter of the Kshattriyas, must here remain untold.

CHARLES JOHNSTON, F. T. S.

KARMA AND PROVIDENCE.

[A PAPER READ BEFORE THE ARYAN T. S. OF NEW YORK BY ALEXANDER FULLERTON.]

Theosophy is reconstructing our conceptions of the universe, and reinterpreting the facts and tendencies and laws of life. When it first appeared on the outskirts of Western thought, an alien in origin and sentiment, it seemed a curious product of Oriental dreaminess, a trifle fantastic as to garb, a little uncouth in its bearing before the wonders of our gifted age, and very far from practical in its ideas of either duty or aspiration ; but because of its difference from all familiar figures, and because, too, it held in its hands the Wand of Magic and was known to have used it with most unaccountable results, certainly a subject for interest, perhaps for study. Not very many years have passed, and yet the newspapers are reporting it, the public turns an ear to it, literature is discussing and fiction appropriating it. The eyes which first inspected it with curiosity are now examining it with interest, and the minds which then surmised that it might hold some truth are now reverent as before an oracle. More than this, hearts weary and sad, weary of explanations which did not explain and of consolations which did not console, sad because finding that the ills of existence are not to be salved with arbitrary beliefs or distant hopes, rallied under the influence of that reviving touch, and demanded fuller, richer knowledge. Most of all, the awakened spirit, realizing that conventional tenets were an opiate and not a tonic, hurled them away and arose in the vigor of a definite and intelligible aspiration. And all classes of inquirers, just in proportion as the inquiry was sincere aud its pursuit continued, found a singular dwarfing of all other topics, a spontaneous, increasing concentration upon this as the one before which the rest were insignificant.

As Theosophy advanced from the outskirts to the centre of thought in the West it was confronted, one after another, with the great problems

which in every age and in every land have engrossed the energy of the thinker. The meaning and end of existence, the nature and direction of responsibility, our future in the world beyond death,—these and kindred questions lie at the door of the soul and meet it on its first excursion into the universe of inquiry. The primary duty of every religious system has been a reply to them, and if that was unsatisfying, men would have none of it. Theosophy undergoes the same rigid interrogation as the rest, and if it has encroached upon the preserves of other faiths and is giving answers to queries on later subjects, we must believe that this is because its first responses were convincing.

Very early in its course it is brought face to face with the great question of Providence, and must give its own interpretation of it. There is one already on the ground. It may not be logical or even rational, but it has the advantage of being in possession and of calming some of the strongest, if not the most meritorious, solicitudes of the soul.

The demand for an active, supervising Deity is almost as universal as a demand for any Deity at all. A Creator withdrawing from care over his creation seems a contradiction in thought. The term "Father" voices the soul's need for a guardianship which shall be both authoritative and paternal. In his "Philosophy of Religion," Morrell found that the last analysis of the religious sentiment is into a sense of dependence. But this almost necessarily implies the converse qualities of provision, oversight, supply. Then, too, the emotional faculty calls for satisfaction. Faith needs a sympathetic ear, a responsive touch, a readiness to use every power of nature for the relief of an appealing sufferer. Thus instinct and devotion unite to cause belief in Providence, and the difficulty of supposing that the Supreme Being looks after all the petty affairs of each of us is met by the fact that to the Infinite all are practicable, and, indeed, that in such a presence gradations in importance disappear.

There is, hence, a stage of religious experience in which every incident in the world of things and men is supposed to express a Divine purpose. God is present everywhere, acting everywhere, adjusting everywhere. "Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered," said Jesus. But in time comes an inevitable change. It is seen that the actual system, however ordered, by no means provides universal good. There are great wastes of sickening sorrow, vast and recurring areas of destitution, bitter cries from weariness and loss and agony. The intellect follows this up by its discovery of the reign of law. Events are not disconnected revelations of as many Divine intentions, but effects rigorously joined to their antecedent causes. As causation is better and more extensively perceived, the domain of admitted law expands, absorbing steadily the territory of Providence, and displacing the conception of ordering with the conception of order. At last

no ground is left. Law is seen to pervade the universe, and to be the condition of all science, all foresight, all business. A life-insurance policy assumes the whole scientific doctrine of the reign of law.

But the sentimental want, though baffled, is not extinct. "There may be truth," it urges, "in the theory of causation and in the belief that the universe is a great machine, wisely contrived, endowed with sufficient impetus, and working automatically along. Yet all machines are liable to disarrangement, and exigencies arise for which the most perfect do not provide. It may very well be, then, that at grave crises, or for particular purposes, or to avert an evil, interposition may be proper. Let it be admitted that the usual administration is by law, if only is made concession that a Providence is sometimes possible." But even this the stern man of science must refuse. He is forced to answer that, whatever may be true of imperfect machines of human make, no breakdown is conceivable in one of celestial origin; and that, even if we could conceive of a universe conducted partly by law and partly by manipulation, we could never define their limits or foresee which would act.

One more plea remains. "I will not contest," says the sentimental want, "the doctrine of uniformity in physical things. But they are not the whole of life. Moral ends are more important. In the interest of morals, Providence is a necessity. To teach a lesson, to emphasize a warning, to recall from recklessness or frivolity or sin, interpositions are essential. A blind material universe, mechanically turning out its infants and swallowing up its dead, is no fitting expression of a Divine fulness. There must be some higher aim, some better purpose." "There is," replies the thinker, "but not as you imagine it. All nature is crowded with moralities; its very uniformity ensures their exhibition. But even if it did not, if occasional interferences were more impressive, how are you to interpret them? You have not the clue to their meaning, and your prophets expound it differently. They do not even expound it fairly. For, as it would jar on the religious sentiment to attribute to Providence the harsh and bitter things, it is mainly the good things with which they credit it. The sickness overcome, the life saved, the steamer rescued, the boon secured, the peril escaped are providential; not the sickness fatal, the life lost, the steamer wrecked, the boon forfeited, the peril triumphant. But if the one is, the other must be. If it is a Providence which brings one vessel safely through the violence of a tempest, it must be a Providence which abandons another to its fate. If it is a Providence which puts a Washington at the head of one nation, it is a Providence which puts a Louis Napoleon at the head of another. If a skater, breaking through the ice, is saved by Providence, the drowning of his comrade must be by Providence; if Providence accounts for a fortunate investment, a fulfilled presentiment, a happy marriage, it

must also be accountable for the broken bank, the discredited prediction, the annals of the Divorce Court.

Nor have we any clue to the interpretation. It will not do to say 'The Moral Lesson,' for we do not know what the lesson is, nor whether it is a lesson at all. A boy swimming on Sunday is drowned. 'This,' urges the religious press, 'expresses the Divine displeasure of such mis-use of Sunday.' 'But,' replies the logician, 'it can hardly do so unless you are prepared to show that all boys swimming on Sunday are drowned, and none on other days.' *Purpose* is the very essence of Providence. If we have no clue to the *purpose* we have no clue to the Providence; for us it does not exist. Nor can you escape the difficulty by saying that it is inscrutable, for that vacates the whole position. If we are unable to scrutinize Providence, we are unable to make assertions about it, much more to expound it. So long as it keeps utterly in the dark, we cannot even prove that it is there."

Thus, step by step, relentless reason forces back the struggling theory of an interposing power ever at work in manipulation, adjustment, the rectification of error in the machine of its own construction, the insistance on truths which it does not enable us to discover, the mumbling of unintelligible warnings which we have no power to make clear. Baffled, confused, exhausted, the old doctrine is now near its end. But the spirit which has informed it is vigorous as ever. Not a whit depressed, it still asserts the need for the perpetual presence of a moral force, for a Providence outside of which not a sparrow shall fall, not a wrong escape.

And it is right. No such sustained cry of the human heart could well be fallacious. It is one of the vindications, one of the glories, of Theosophy that it gives the frankest, most ungrudging welcome to every want, intellectual or sentimental, of humanity, and then provides for it. To me it seems that this is peculiarly true in the matter of Providence. The religious instinct will never give up its demand for a Providence. It revolts at the thought that there is no moral order in the world, that good and bad fare alike, that character goes for nothing. An elaborate system in which the Supreme Being has expressed all the qualities but those most strongly called for, is to it a monstrosity and a contradiction. You may wrench away from it its theories and its whimsical or unsatisfying methods of interpretation, but it will construct new ones at once. With what amplitude of recognition Theosophy steps forward to greet this instinct! "You are entirely right," it says. "I am with you in fullest sympathy. You cannot insist more than I that the moralities exact an agency by which their vindication shall be assured. But such an agency must be intelligible and consistent. It must be so comprehensive that not a right or a wrong shall go unrewarded, so impartial that it handles all men with absolute equality, so precise that its

equations shall exactly balance. You can never invent such, you can never discover it. But you do not need to. The doctrine of Karma, the treasured possession of the Wisdom-Religion, fulfils all the requirements you insist upon, avoids all the difficulties which embarrass you, and responds to every call of reason, justice, and the moral sense."

The vast superiority of Karma as a substitute for the conventional idea of Providence is evident from every point of view. It is not a negation of Providence, it is an enlarged affirmation of it. Instead of a fitful, capricious, inconstant, purposeless, mysterious, undecipherable force, it is a lucid, inerrant, steady, and meaningful adjuster. For what, after all, is its definition? *The law of ethical causation. Law*, not whim; *causation*, not accident; and this, which the most orthodox now admit in the worlds of physics and of mind, extended to the noblest region, that of morals. Not that every incident of every life is to be read as a revelation of immediate desert, for that would be to forget the correlative doctrine of Reincarnation; but that the sum total of experiences in the chain of lives cannot err, and that the significance of the items in any one link may measurably be inferred. The conception of Providence expands till it covers everything. The religious instinct is satisfied, the claims of reason are allowed, the demand of justice is fulfilled.

I think that the devotional books of the future will print "Karma" where they now print "Providence." The concept is so much richer that the poorer one will not long content. The word "Karma" is not as strange as it was formerly. Sometimes we see it in improbable quarters. By and by it will be domesticated into the language, for Theosophists constantly employ it, and though—to transpose Gladstone's definition of a deputation—they do not signify many, they certainly signify much. After it is domesticated people will not be afraid of it. Then they will come to like it, as we all like what is familiar. In time the meaning will filter into them. It will displace the old narrow conception and establish itself as a broad and healthy philosophy of life. And when Karma is recognized, not merely as an ever-acting principle, but as an ever-forming fund, what may not be hoped for in the melioration of mankind?

Conversations on Occultism.

Student.—What principal idea would it be well for me to dwell upon in my studies on the subject of elementals?

Sage.—You ought to clearly fix in your mind and fully comprehend a few facts and the laws relating to them. As the elemental world is wholly different from the one visible to you, the laws governing them and their

actions cannot as yet be completely defined in terms now used either by scientific or metaphysical schools. For that reason, only a partial description is possible. Some of those facts I will give you, it being well understood that I am not including all classes of elemental beings in my remarks.

First, then, Elementals have no form.

Student.—You mean, I suppose, that they have no limited form or body as ours, having a surface upon which sensation appears to be located.

Sage.—Not only so, but also that they have not even a shadowy, vague, astral form such as is commonly ascribed to ghosts. They have no distinct personal form in which to reveal themselves.

Student.—How am I to understand that, in view of the instances given by Bulwer Lytton and others of appearances of elementals in certain forms?

Sage.—The shape given to or assumed by any elemental is always subjective in its origin. It is produced by the person who sees, and who, in order to be more sensible of the elemental's presence, has unconsciously given it a form. Or it may be due to a collective impression on many individuals, resulting in the assumption of a definite shape which is the result of the combined impressions.

Student.—Is this how we may accept as true the story of Luther's seeing the devil?

Sage.—Yes. Luther from his youth had imagined a personal devil, the head of the fraternity of wicked ones, who had a certain specific form. This instantly clothed the elementals that Luther evoked, either through intense enthusiasm or from disease, with the old image reared and solidified in his mind; and he called it the Devil.

Student.—That reminds me of a friend who told me that in his youth he saw the conventional devil walk out of the fire place and pass across the room, and that ever since he believed the devil had an objective existence.

Sage.—In the same way also you can understand the extraordinary occurrences at Salem in the United States, when hysterical and mediumistic women and children saw the devil and also various imps of different shapes. Some of these gave the victims information. They were all elementals, and took their illusionary forms from the imaginations and memory of the poor people who were afflicted.

Student.—But there are cases where a certain form always appears. Such as a small, curiously-dressed woman who had never existed in the imagination of those seeing her; and other regularly recurring appearances. How were those produced, since the persons never had such a picture before them?

Sage.—These pictures are found in the aura of the person, and are due to pre-natal impressions. Each child emerges into life the possessor of pictures floating about and clinging to it, derived from the mother; and thus you can go back an enormous distance in time for these pictures, all through the long line of your deseent. It is a part of the action of the same law which causes effects upon a child's body through influences acting on the mother during gestation.[1]

Student.—In order, then, to know the cause of any such appearance, one must be able to look back, not only into the person's present life, but also into the ancestor's past?

Sage.—Precisely. And for that reason an occultist is not hasty in giving his opinion on these particular facts. He can only state the general law, for a life might be wasted in needless investigation of an unimportant past. You can see that there would be no justification for going over a whole lifetime's small affairs in order to tell a person at what time or juncture an image was projected before his mind. Thousands of such impressions are made every year. That they are not *developed into memory* does not prove their non-existence. Like the unseen picture upon the photographer's sensitive plate, they lie awaiting the hour of development.

Student.—In what way should I figure to myself the essence of an elemental and its real mode of existence?

Sage.—You should think of them as *centres of energy* only, that act always in accordance with the laws of the plane of nature to which they belong.

Student.—Is it not just as if we were to say that gunpowder is an elemental and will invariably explode when lighted? That is, that the elementals knew no rules of either wrong or right, but surely act when the incitement to their natural action is present? They are thus, I suppose, said to be implacable.

Sage.—Yes; they are like the lightning which flashes or destroys as the varying circumstances compel. It has no regard for man, or love, or beauty, or goodness, but may as quickly kill the innocent, or burn the property of the good as of the wicked man.

Student.—What next?

Sage.—That the elementals live in and through all objects, as well as beyond the earth's atmosphere.

Student.—Do you mean that a certain class of elementals, for instance, exist in this mountain, and float unobstructed through men, earth, rocks, and trees?

1 See *Iris Unveiled* in the chapter on Teratology. [Ed.]

Sage.—Yes, and not only that, but at the same time, penetrating that class of elementals, there may be another class which float not only through rocks, trees, and men, but also through the first of the classes referred to.

Student.—Do they perceive these objects obstructive for us, through which they thus float?

Sage.—No, generally they do not. In exceptional cases they do, and even then never with the same sort of cognition that we have. For them the objects have no existence. A large block of stone or iron offers for them no limits or density. It may, however, make an impression on them by way of change of color or sound, but not by way of density or obstruction.

Student.—Is it not something like this, that a current of electricity passes through a hard piece of copper wire, while it will not pass through an unresisting space of air.

Sage.—That serves to show that the thing which is dense to one form of energy may be open to another. Continuing your illustration, we see that man can pass through air but is stopped by metal. So that "hardness" for us is not "hardness" for electricity. Similarly, that which may stop an elemental is not a body that we call hard, but something which for us is intangible and invisible, but presents to them an adamantine front.

Student.—I thank you for your instruction.

Sage.—Strive to deserve further enlightenment!

A Plea for the Children.

A few years ago, the interest of the "average man" in occultism was *nil*. Now, to quote Molière the witty, "we have changed all that." Many an honest man is an unconscious theosophist, and we have innumerable new versions of "*Le Philosophe sans le savoir.*" Little by little the stealthy tide has stolen in, until the public in general takes its daily rations of occultism in novels, essays, and experiences, and has even adopted its expressive phraseology. In a word, the average man is coming abreast of the theosophical student. This sign is favorable. It marks the moment when a fresh impulse from higher spheres may be expected, and which will impel the advance-members of our era further still. These advance-members, in the present respect of which we write, are the theosophists.

One step, of greater present importance than any other, now remains to be taken and promptly taken. Opportunity is a fruit which will not keep.

It is a vital truth that real knowledge, if unused, injures the mind that keeps it locked-up and barren. Knowledge is not a dead thing like the fruit of the loom and the easel. Knowledge is a seed, a living germ; it should be sown, it should be active, should fructify. He who stores up spiritual truths as mere intellectual acquisitions soon has a mental and moral plethora, and ends by turning from his normal food. The mind has its indigestions as well as the stomach, and of a more deadly order, for all things have more power as we proceed inwards. In the natural procedure of life, we learn one thing at a time, and it is learned by living it. A truth may first be intellectually perceived (so far as our consciousness of its entrance goes), but if it is not then lived out, it remains as a point of stagnation in the mind and more or less impedes the circulation of Thought. It is thus that our mental limitations accrue by degrees. To live a truth, we naturally begin by conforming our daily actions to it. Its overflow is first felt by those nearest to us; they are blessed or banned by our use or misuse of it. Equally, if we withhold it, they are deprived of a benefit to which they have a moral right. Although they may be unconscious of the loss, we have injured them in direct proportion to the value of the truth withheld. The theosophist is, as a rule, ready and willing to impart this gracious knowledge which has radiated into his life from hidden spheres and touched it with a glory which escapes the mould of words. But how many theosophists realize that the persons nearest to us, our rightful heirs, are the children? Do they say that these mutinous heads clustering and tossing about us are too full of toys and the glee of a perpetual springtime to find room for larger learning? No observer of children, no nursery eavesdropper, will maintain it. In their butterfly flight they pause, poised just out of reach, let fall some reflection or question full of mysticism, and are gone, swifter than the winged answer. They are sturdy witnesses to the reality of the unseen. They sense it, they ruminate upon it; they turn some theory of their own over and over as the young calf chews its first cud. They find it and use it in their games. They project their knowledge tentatively upon their older friends, in whose conversations they do not find it figured. They are full of naïve wonder at this omission, but, once lightly dealt with, once mocked, they shut fast those rosy lips and dream on in silence. They are nearer than we to the Unseen from which we have all come: to us a speculation, to them *it is a memory*, and they resent its profanation instinctively.

Instances of astral and spiritual experiences on the part of children may easily be multiplied, but in the Tea Table of this magazine they have been sufficiently outlined.

The pressing question then for theosophists is this: Shall we leave the children to these vague foreshadowings of truth, until the pressure of material life has dimmed the prophecy of pure youth and eradicated the

finer impulse? Or, where the psychic nature is strong, shall we leave them balanced between dread of these sights unseen by others about them, and the keener dread of their own sanity and health? Shall we leave them tossing there, or shall we put a rudder in their hands? The budding form, the starry gaze, the blossom-tinted cheek are so dear; are the hearts, the minds less precious to us? Do we say that these truths are too grand for them? They are not truths if they are not of a pristine simplicity. The limpid purity of the child reflects the True better than our troubled soul can do, and "heaven is near us in our infancy." Springtime is seed time the world over. While the parents are reaching out for Truth, shall the children go on imbibing error? Let us give them the bread of life, not the stone of materiality: let us give them the teachings of universal Justice, of Love. Let us show them how all things move by Law; the rebound of good and evil; the magnificent reaches of Life from world to world, from form to form. When we trace out Karma and Reincarnation to them, first in natural and afterward in ethical symbol, we shall endear the universe to them as they find it welded in links of harmony and love. This joy we owe them, and it is owed higher still; it is a debt to the Supreme.

There should be Sunday Schools for the children of theosophists who believe and practice what they profess. Each Branch could start one. In progressive Boston the *idea* has already taken root. We seem to be irresolute for want of a practical method. Catechisms could be compounded from those of Colonel Olcott. Interesting dialogues and tales might be written by those versed in the labyrinths of these young minds: we all hold a clue to them; this clue is Love. Let us pay our debt to the children.

AUGUST WALDERSEE, F. T. S.

A GERMAN MYSTIC'S TEACHINGS.

In the last three numbers of the PATH we have given a story by the German Mystic Kernning of the experiences of a sensitive. The story is called advisedly "From Sensitive to Initiate." We did not think that it was intended to show what the final initiation is, but only one of the many initiations we have to undergo in our passage through matter. The trials of Catherine illustrate those we all have, whether we know them as such or not. She had a presence to annoy her; we, although not sensitive as she was, have within us influences and potential presences that affect us just as much; they cause us to have bias this way or that, to be at times clouded in our estimate of what is the true course or the true view to take, and, like her, so long as we do not recognise the cause of the clouds, we will be unable to dissipate them. But Kernning was a theosophist, and one of those men who knew the truth in theory and at the same time were able to make

a practical application of what they knew. There are many cases to-day in which sensitive people do just what Caroline did and have "presences" to annoy them; but how many of our theosophists or spiritualists would be able to cast the supposed obsesser out, as Mohrland did in the story? They can be counted on one hand. The simplicity with which Kernning wrote should not blind us to the value of his work. In the preceding articles by him which we have from time to time given, there is much to be learned by those who look below the surface. We therefore add the following as a note to the last story in order to try to show its theosophic meaning.

The conversation about "Mantrams" between the Sage and the Student in the PATH for August involves an occult truth so important that it is worth while to recall that the power of mantrams is recognized by the school of German occultists represented by Kernning. Readers of the PATH who have attentively read "Some Teachings of a German Mystic" have observed that in nearly all instances the pupils achieve an awakening of their inner self, or the "spiritual rebirth," by means of a particular word, a sentence, or perhaps even a letter of the alphabet, and that, in cases where persons are involuntarily awakened, it is by continued thinking upon some object or person, as in the case of the young sailor whose mind was continually dwelling on his absent sweetheart and was thereby released from the limitations of his own personality. Caroline Ruppert was aroused by a morbid dwelling on her disappointment in love and by remorse for her conduct towards her invalid mother, until these thoughts gained a mantric power over her, and it required intelligent exercise with other mantrams, given her by the Adept Mohrland, to restore her self-control and give her a symmetrical development. Out of a medium, or mere sensitive, she thus became an initiate, able to control the psychic forces by her own will. Every hapless "medium" who is obsessed by elementals and elementaries that make life a torment, and who is compelled to do the bidding of these forces generated by personal vitality, and whose conflict obscures the true self—like a spring whose waters, finding no adequate channel, rise to the level of their source and thus drown it—, has it in his or her power, by intelligent exercise of the will, to obtain command over what they are now obliged to obey. But, in doing this, "right motive" must be kept constantly in view; care must be exercised to keep absolutely free from all mercenary or other selfish considerations, else one will become a black magician. The condition known as "mediumship" has been the subject of too much indiscriminate condemnation; it can be made a blessing as well as a curse, and the aim should be, not to suppress it, but to develop it in the right direction. The psychic powers, like all other natural forces, can be made either a good servant or a terrible master, and, in proportion to their subtlety as compared with other forces, so much greater is their power for good or for evil.

In psychic work the power of united endeavor has often been emphasized, and it is easy to see that the power is developed whether consciously or unconsciously exercised. Thus, with thousands thinking unitedly in one direction, as in the present Theosophical awakening, they all help each other, lending strength to each other's will, whether they are aware of it or not. According to this principle it would seem that a word used commonly for mantric purposes has a greater potency over the forces of the spirit, owing to the impression it has made upon the *akasa*, than a word not commonly used, for in the case of the former the user has the aid of the wills of all others who have used it.

In one of his works, "The Freemason," Kernning gives a good explanation of the power of mantrams, in replying to the strictures of a rationalistic critic, who says that such a use of words is made by the bonzes (yogis) of India, and therefore must be wholly nonsensical! Says Kernning: "Whoever has a great love for an art or science not only finds delight in the results, but their very names have a sort of magic power with him. Whoever feels a love for another person is moved whenever he thinks of that person or repeats the name of that person. The gambler, in spite of all the arguments against his infatuation made by others, and often, indeed, by himself, always beholds dice and cards before his eyes. The drunkard only needs, in order to be made thirsty, to hear the name of wine. The miser lives in the vision of his ducats and dollars, the ambitious man upon the insignia of fame and the plaudits of the multitude, the courtier upon his orders and titles, and in all these cases, not only are the things themselves concerned, but the names have become idolized. Now suppose that one should, instead of swimming in the depths, fill spirit and soul with exalted and divine ideas and names, can other than most beneficent results follow? Indeed, could a person be a genuine Christian without the life of Christ, and even his name, becoming animate in spirit and soul? Therefore there is no nonsensical or unreasonable practice in this; on the contrary, every one should be made aware of this simple method, which is founded upon human nature and is confirmed by experience, that he may attain the means of ennobling his nature, of directing his energies towards the highest end of his life, and reaching this end with certainty."

TEA TABLE TALK.

Once again our friends have taken my task from my hands. The following letters, depicting their experiences touch the heart with a sense of their truth, and may perhaps encourage others suffering in silent from experiences deemed by them to be unreal hallucinations; whereas they are only abnormal, that is, they are products of a state other than the ordinary, average state of

present humanity. This state is none the less real, for all that. Those who undergo it would not doubt this,—and, speaking truly, in the depths of their hearts they *do not* doubt it,—were they not judging themselves by the verdict of others instead of their own. Because the average man sneers at such things, having no inner sense developed whereby he may cognize them, and because the average man is in the majority, many persons suffer agonies of doubt and self distrust in silence. Listen to this speaker.

"For many years of my life I saw at different times spectral persons and animals gliding about me. They looked like real persons, only that their movements had no jar; they seemed to pass swimmingly from point to point. Sometimes they had a wraith-like, misty appearance; more often they were solid and strong in cclor. The animals occasionally wore shapes unknown to me. These creations were first seen by me during an illness occasioned by a severe blow upon the head, received in a moment of great danger, and while my health was in a critical condition. I spoke freely of them to my physicians, who gave it as their opinion that my brain was disturbed by the blow. In other words, for a few months I was considered insane, or partly so. I soon recovered my health and was able to leave my sick room, to travel, to study, to re-enter life, and to engage successfully in business. Yet I was a most wretched person. Why? Because I still saw these appearances. Not always, but from time to time, especially if I felt below par, or if the nervous headaches to which I became subject after this blow were coming on. Now I knew myself to be in all respects, — in all *other* respects, — a perfectly sane person, and I held a high place, socially and intellectually, among my fellows. To make such an admission was to cast upon myself the slur of insanity, cripple myself for life, and give distress to some, at least, of my friends. The fact that a connection of mine was hopelessly insane would also go to overshadow my own case. I determined, naturally, to keep silence. But oh! the doubts of myself, the secret fears when, in company with others, I would see these creatures glide about us and knew that I alone saw and felt them. I almost believed that my brain was fatally injured, in this respect. at least. In all others it was sound as a bell. One day relief came. I was talking with a friend, and one of the creatures passed through the air. I glanced at him askance to see if he noticed my slight start upon seeing it. To my amazement, my delight, my extraordinary joy, he glanced at *it;* his brows contracted slightly, then he glanced at me and abruptly resumed his broken sentence. 'Hurrah!' thought I, 'there are two of us then.' I felt really ashamed of myself to see how truly 'misery loves company.' I resolved he should confess. Imagine the way we fenced, doubled, and twisted! But not for so long. My friend was a student of occultism; he knew the rationale of these shapes. He had no lurking, horrid fear of his own sanity to combat. He only did not wish to cast his knowledge before the ignorant. What a blessed relief! I felt pounds lighter, years younger. Soon I found other persons who had the same experience. When I found them accurately describing the object seen by me at the same moment, I could not doubt that this object was real, and not a figment of my brain. Most of these persons were in perfect health and had never met with

any nervous shock or accident. I may say that my life has been renewed since the hour in which that blessed creature—it was a translucent man!—appeared to me at just the right moment, when I happened to have an occultist to my hand. I find fear, or the burden of silence, afflicting most of these seers. 'You do not know what it is,' said one to me at a T. S. meeting, 'to see these things all about, and hear people denying that they exist, and to have to keep still for fear they will call me crazy, or do worse. Sometimes I see these shapes sucked right up into the aura of those who are saying there are no such things. Their thinking about them with scorn and hatred seems to attract them more than desire does. And sometimes people come here and talk so good, and all the time I see such horrible things about them; pictures of dreadful things they have done; or a horrible order of decay about them that comes from the foul astral body inside, which I can see all putrified; or bad elementals that come and go and are servants to their wicked thoughts. It is hard then to listen to their fine declarations.'"

In the Lotus (Paris) for May there is a fine article upon Hallucination (so called) to which *Lucifer* has just called attention, while mistakingly attributing it to the June number. It reminds us that "The ordinary or normal eye seizes a certain state, or series of states, of luminous vibrations of the ether. It perceives material objects by the modifications which these objects impart to the etheric vibrations. If they did not set up this modification for our eye, we could not perceive them, any more than the fly can see the pane of glass against which it buzzes obstinately, without any visual perception of the obstacle which it feels. Normal sight, so called, is that which perceives the modifications which material objects impart to luminous vibrations." (On the principle that every object and every atom try to impart their special rate of vibration to all their surroundings, just as each ordinary human being wants all others to think as he does.) "If other objects exist which are also capable of modifying the etheric vibrations, normal sight cannot perceive them; it ignores them; for it they do not exist. They can only be seized by an eye which is differently organized, which seizes readily such modifications of the luminous vibrations as are imperceptible to normal sight. Like all which is human, normal sight is vain. It is persuaded that nothing can be more perfect than itself. If those who do not see objects normally invisible, admitted that those who do see them perceive real objects, they would by this admission confess that their faculty of sight is not perfect. Common sense—and common in both senses—having concluded that the seer was an individual possessed of a deranged nervous system, only needed to find a word to indicate this derangement or this disease. The word 'hallucination' was found, and all was said. But a fact of sight cannot exist without at least two conditions,—the organ of vision and the object seen. There is a simple means of proving the regular or irregular working of the organ of sight. It will be evident that it works regularly if, besides these invisible objects, it also perceives the objects seen by all the world."[1] Mr. Guymiot then goes on to consider matter and its states. "Matter escapes the finger

1 Condensed translation.

and the eye ; it passes from the solid state to the liquid, from the liquid to the vaporous, from the vaporous to the fluidic or etheric. The most determined materialist is forced to admit that the etheric state is *something*, since it can contain all the matter hitherto contained in the solid state. If matter in the solid state forms beings, the only beings perceived by normal sight, who dares affirm that it does not also form others in the liquid state (undines), in the gaseous state (sylphs), and in the etheric state (salamanders)? It is not capriciously, it is not by hazard that matter passes from the invisible into the visible state ; crystallization demonstrates this. To do this, matter obeys what we call laws, a vague expression whose signification would be more precise if we said that matter obeys Will." Our author then demonstrates that all we know of such laws is that they have an action analogous to the human will-power, and by a series of excellent arguments he deduces the presence, in Nature, of great conscious powers called "gods" in occult literature. We are told by *Lucifer* that "this article has special value as, in a measure, preparing the reader's mind for this theme as treated of at length in Mme. Blavatsky's forthcoming *Secret Doctrine*."

A friend whose experience has been rich writes us :

"Your Tea Table attracted me. It made me feel like inviting myself to join it. I have never had the society of a theosophist, never known one personally. A friend sent me a copy of the *Wilkesbarre Letters* which proved the key to my own experience. This has been so peculiar as to make me the subject of persecution in which I lost home, friends, and fortune. Still I hold that which cannot be taken from me, and have retrieved more than was lost, without the sacrifice of a principle. A kind of figurative language, in which every natural object is the exponent of something in the world of mind and morals. was given me, by which I read many things not found in the books, and learned to ask and answer questions. Not quite satisfied with intangible evidences, I longed for something more, some proof of the many things which were borne in upon my spirit vision and my spirit ears. So also this was given me. The outward sense of touch corresponded with the hearing ear and seeing eye, so that I tried to lay hold upon objects which appeared before me. In some instances I knew of the presence of persons whom I never saw in life, and have been advised by them ; and, unlike the spirits who answer by raps, I have never once failed when following the directions given me through this symbolical or figurative language. Though I may wait for the power to use for the good of others the riches of this interior world as given me, still I realize the truth that "one day with the Lord is as a thousand years," and I am very happy in the light that is around me, *a light which may be felt*, and humble my naturally proud spirit, since I am debtor to Celestial Truth for all my soul-wealth. Her ministers are many and her messengers are divine."

It is necessary to discriminate in experiences. Those of this friend are true ; some are very high ones (as since given to us), others again are of the astral plane. This is natural ; the being is growing all at once, equally in all parts, and has experience of various planes or portions of his vast

organism which has touch with the whole universe. This is the great value of Theosophy, or the *science* of Wisdom. It enables us to classify, to range, to understand our experiences, to cultivate some and disregard others until our judgment has ripened. Where this friend speaks of the "spirit eye and spirit ear," it is really only the astral sense. In spirit, the senses are not; they are blent to one thing, *Knowledge;* this is not subdivided into various kinds of sensation; it is one whole. Again, the reason those teachers proved reliable was because they are probably the messengers of the Higher Self, or reflections from that Self, sent to teach one of pure motive *who did not mistake them for the spirits of the dead and so degrade them to a lower form in the mind*, but whose spiritual sense was sufficiently quickened to know that they had a *real* source of Being. Where the "light that can be *felt*" is mentioned, (the italics are mine), it is evidence that this light is material, substantial, although it is so by means of the developed astral senses which convey its impressions to the gross outer body *from within*. It is the ether in the fourth, or perhaps the fifth, state, which last is "protyle," the latest "scientific discovery" of Mr. Crookes, and it is felt by the above student in the state to him normal, e. g. without going into trance. In other words, the astral body is sufficiently developed to be in continuous synchronous vibration with that state of matter, which therefore becomes visible to the student. Scientists forget the spiritual aspects of rarefied matter, and often theosophists also neglect the fact that "Purush and Prakriti (Nature and Spirit) are always conjoined." They think the word matter, or substance, degrades their experience, whereas some substance, however rarefied, is necessary for manifestation, until we pass into the regions where thought itself ends. If we will ask ourselves what part of our nature is affected by a given experience, we obtain a clue to the nature of that experience; we know its plane and order, provided we ask with sufficient concentration, or have opened the spiritual perception. Those who have never known this often think they have; they confound it with the keen astral sense. Once known, it can never be mistaken for aught else; in that state, to *see* is to *be*. A contemporary gives "instructions" how to develop "light and understanding." To force the astral senses thus in advance of the spiritual perception which interprets and governs these others, is as dangerous as giving a child a loaded fire-arm to play with; and, moreover, such acquirements belong to the astral body and are not sure possessions of the soul.

JULIUS.

LITERARY NOTES.

THEOSOPHIST for July shows the hand of Col. Olcott. The first article is upon "Precipitated Pictures." In view of the account given of Mme. Diss Debar's alleged precipitation of pictures in oil and crayon, Col. Olcott refers to his own experiences in New York with precipitations. He also gives a good explanation of how by strong biologizing a canvass might be removed from the room, the sitter made to see a duplicate in its place, the picture be painted by hand in the next room, and then put in place of the illusion in such

a way that the sitter would think it had been precipitated on the spot. Next follows an article on "Suggestion" in hypnotic experiments. In "The Revival of Hinduism" it is justly claimed that the theosophical Sun has risen, and in the words, "When some of the apparently unmeaning ceremonies and "observances of Hinduism were scientifically expounded by the Society " * * the Hindu mind * * reawoke to appreciate the glories of "Hinduism, throwing off the lethargy that oppressed it," we find an expression of the effect on the Hindus of our work there. Another short installment of the *Angel Peacock* follows. There is a long account of the last American Theosophical Convention, and other articles are continued. An interesting account is given of the celebration of Buddha's Birthday in Ceylon, which, among other things, shows what an influence the Theosophical Society has had in the revival of Buddhism, as testified to by the High Priest at Colombo. It is important to know that through Col. Olcott's efforts in England in 1884 this day has been made a governmental holiday in Ceylon.

THE LOTUS (Paris) for July is at hand. Among other interesting articles it contains one upon the "Psychology of Ancient Egypt" by H. P. Blavatsky, and a continuation of Amaravella's strong discourse upon Parabrahm. The troubles in the Isis Society appear to be quietly settling down in favor of the new President, Monsieur Gaboriau. The Society has been favored by a special visit of Mr. Archibald Keightley of London, as delegate from H. P. Blavatsky. The August No. contains a translation of Massey's "Opinions of the ancients on psychic bodies," "Theosophy," by Hartmann, the conclusion of Du Prel's "Scientific standpoint of the post-mortem state," Subba Row's admirable "Notes on occult philosophy," "Astrology" by Barlet, "Dreams" by Guymiot, "The destruction of life" by Meroyn, and a charming bit of verse on Labor, by Rameau. Among the "divers facts" with which this magazine always concludes, is the following interesting experiment, which the writer says "may be traced to magnetism or spiritism; I rather incline to magnetism." He had read in Jacolliot's "Travels to the country of the fakir—charmers" an account of a fakir who was able to make water boil by means of the magnetic fluid emitted from his hands, without touching the water. The writer resolved to try this experiment, and did so by placing three persons of different degrees of sensitiveness around a porcelain basin full of water, over which their hands were held at a height of from 2 to 3 inches, the little fingers touching to make a chain. In ten minutes the water began to boil, at first imperceptibly, then "as if little fishes were playing about in it." The magnetic fluid seemed to come in gushes, and the boiling decreased or increased as the hands were raised or lowered, although they never touched the water, which had a slightly acid taste with a flavor of sulphur. The sèance lasted half an hour, and seems well authenticated.

JUSTICE A HEALING POWER, (*Carter & Karrick, Boston, 1888. 25 cents,*) is a brochure by M. J. Barnett, intended to enforce the necessity of justice, not only in its own peculiar field, but also as a means of getting health and keeping it.

HESTIA is a new magazine started in New Zealand, and is devoted to the teachings of the ancient sages, philosophy, and science. A theosophist is the founder, and later on it is intended to boldly proclaim its theosophical character. For ourselves, we believe in telling people of theosophy, whether it seems they are ready for it or not. This Journal is well printed on good paper, and its first two numbers promise well. At present it is free. Address Edwards & Co., Brandon St., Wellington, New Zealand.

THE LIFE OF JEHOSHUA THE PROPHET OF NAZARETH. This new book by Dr. F. Hartmann is just at hand. It is "An occult study and a key to the Bible." The author says in the preface: "The only object of the following pages is to aid in dispelling the mists which for many centuries have been gathering around the person of the supposed founder of Christianity, and which have prevented mankind from obtaining a clear view of the true Redeemer * * , but who can only be found within the interior temple of the soul by him in whom his presence becomes incarnate"; and yet we are sorry to find the book marred by a great deal that seems to us nonsensical, as in the repetition of a quantity of matter about supposed "initiations," which is given in all seriousness and which is taken from the French of Christian and other unreliable sources. Then the old story, from the Talmud, that Jesus was stoned to death, will hardly do at this time. It is not true, either, for he was not stoned nor was he initiated in the manner given. We do not think that the true history of this great Initiate has yet been given: it will have to be written by one of his contemporaries, and that true historian will at the same time be able to explain about the Karma of Jesus, now very heavy and of a sort which an Initiate even could not wipe out nor divert. [*Occult Pub. Co., Boston, 1888. $1.50*]

THE KALEVALA.—Translated into English by Prof. J. M. Crawford, (*1888, J. B. Alden, New York.*) It is a matter of congratulation that the first complete English translation of the great Finnish Epic has been made by a Cincinnati man. Though the books are hardly yet dry from the hands of the binder, scarcely two weeks having passed since the advance copies appeared, the Eastern papers have found time to give most elaborate reviews, ranking the work of Dr. Crawford very high for its literary merit, poetic imagery, and faithful rendering of the great Epic into English. The *N. Y. Times* recently devoted a whole column editorially to the poem and the mythology of the Finns, and its literary editor, Mr. Chas. DeKay, has written a most elaborate and classical paper on the subject which is soon to appear. It is everywhere admitted that the appearance of the poem is a very important event in English literature.

The first feeling on taking up these two beautifully printed volumes is one of profound surprise that a poem of such magnitude and beauty could so long have remained unknown to English readers, and this feeling is only deepened as, with unlagging interest, the reader pursues his way through the poem itself. The magic of nature and the most intense poetic feeling give voice and character to a people but little known and by many supposed to be rude and uncultured. To the Finn the epic is a sacred inheritance, and to alter a word from the original form is considered sacrilege. While, therefore, the recital of the poem by old gray-beards served to impress it deeply on the memory of the young; and while its recital served as a solace to while away the long, dark, dreary winter-days; it also served to preserve the poem itself and at last to transmit it to other generations and other climes.

It is admitted by competent critics like Prof. Sayce, Canon Taylor, and Mr. Chas. DeKay, to be purely pagan in origin and of great antiquity, having been orally transmitted from father to son, generation after generation, for at least *three thousand years*, never having appeared in print

in any language until within the last half century. This fact gives a romantic interest to the great epic unequaled in modern times. It is doubtful if any other great epic is so distinctly national in character. It shows at once the legendary lore, the peculiar beliefs, and the daily life of a people who have been but little changed by outward influences. The deeds of fabled heroes, the magical incantations, and the commonest things of daily life, are so woven together as to give one in a single picture the genius of the Finnish race. It is by no means strange that a people who patterned their lives after such high ideals, where simple truth, justice and simplicity of life were held as the supreme good, should be found possessed of these very qualities. The first article of faith with every Finn is that he owes it to *himself* to be absolutely truthful, just, and kind. This to-day is their characteristic. To give any detailed analysis of the poem itself would require more space and time than we can at present spare.

We have read the poem because it is full of Occultism and Magic, and shows the ancient Finns to have been believers in Reincarnation and such theosophical doctrines. There is much in it drawn from ancient magic that will not be understood except by those who really know what true occultism is. Part of it is obscure for the every day scientist and archæologist, because it really deals with periods of evolution long anterior to the appearance on earth of the present human race; with a time, in fact, when the coming human beings were in constant intercourse with the Deva world, the same period spoken of in the Old Testament when the sons of God married the daughters of men. The trials of the neophyte are well shown in the story of Lemminkainen and the advice of the Guru in the mother's advice "to give half away, to take but half a stride, and occupy only half of a seat." Similar things can be found in the Indian books. There is also an "Isle of Forgetfulness" where one is safe and enjoys great pleasure for a period, after which he returns home (to rebirth). This is Devachan. In Kullervo's story, Reincarnation is plainly told about. These two volumes are full of interest and profit for the student of occultism who draws from the study of ancient beliefs and religions much that in his long flight through rebirth since that old time he had forgotten.

SPIRIT COMMUNION is a beautifully printed and bound volume of 260 pages, containing the inspirational utterances of the late H. B. Champion who died in August, 1887. It is compiled by M. C. C. Church. Only one hundred copies were printed, and we desire to return thanks for No. 84. There are many inspiring thoughts in the book.

NOTICE: THE SECRET DOCTRINE.—It is fully expected that the first, and probably the second, volume of *The Secret Doctrine* will be ready for mailing about October 26th. We do not usually recommend to Branch Libraries the purchase of any particular book, but the great importance of having this extraordinary revelation of Theosophic doctrine within the reach of every member justifies the suggestion that the members of each Branch should contribute funds for its purchase as a permanent possession of the Branch. And we refer to the subject at this time because, under the arrangements made by the London publishers, the privilege of securing it at the reduced rate ceases upon its issue.

CORRESPONDENCE.

AHMEDABAD, INDIA, 12th August, 1888.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PATH:

Dear Sir and Brother:—In the June number of your valuable Journal there has been published a letter, signed by myself and other Indian Theosophists, to the effect that, if Madame Blavatsky consented, her forthcoming

great work would be revised by competent Hindu students in India who would be able to throw a great deal of light on Indian Philosophy. When that letter was written we were under the impression that a learned gentleman here, who had expressed his willingness to revise the "Secret Doctrine" under certain conditions, would really do so. Myself and another friend represented all the facts to Madame Blavatsky, who at once agreed to place her volumes into the hands of the said Indian scholar and to abide by his conditions. For reasons, however, best known to himself, the said student of Indian Esoterism refused to undertake the task of revising the book or even parts of it.

Madame Blavatsky, therefore, can no longer be blamed for not taking the assistance of Indian scholars. Perhaps it is after all for the best that her marvellous and unique work should come out as originally written by herself.

I have thought fit to write these few lines lest our former letter might create some misunderstanding. Yours fraternally,

N. D. KHANDALVALA, F. T. S.

CEYLON, COLOMBO, 14th August, 1888.

MR. W. Q. JUDGE,
Gen'l Secretary, Theos. Society, New York.

Esteemed Brother:—We are thankful to you for the occasional announcements that you make in the PATH about the work of our Society in Ceylon. No other Society of Western origin in Ceylon has ever been so popular as that of ours, and no other Society has done so much good within these few years as ours. This ought to make you glad, for you were one of the founders of the Parent T. S. The Society has been a beacon light to shipwrecked souls. It has led them to think of the incalculable importance of unselfish work. The few devoted souls who are working in its interest have received much encouragement from unseen quarters. The progress of the Society has been gradual, and at the same time steady. The work that we have in view is of enormous magnitude; little has been done and much remains to be done. The most important work that we have commenced is the establishment of schools for the education of our boys. Hundreds of addresses have been delivered in almost every town and village in stirring up the Buddhists by our beloved President, and the nucleus of a National Fund was created by him. About £1,000 have been collected and deposited in the Bank. For the accomplishment of this great work a sum of £25,000 is required. How shall we be able to realize this grand object? Our little island cannot arise this amount, and we have to appeal to our Buddhist Potentates and sympathising co-religionists of all countries for help. Christian Missionaries are trying their best to undermine our religion, and they succeed in making converts of our people. Christianity has been the bane of Ceylon. It is responsible for the crimes that are being committed in Ceylon by our people. Vice and drink were unknown in Buddhist Ceylon, and the historical records testify to this assertion. With the advancement of European civilization crime of course increases.

Our beloved colleague, Mr. Leadbeater, permanently resides in Ceylon, and his presence is of the greatest use to us. We want two or three more European Buddhists to keep up with the increasing work. I have sent a copy of the specimen of the "Buddhist" which we hope to bring out next November. The "Sarasavisandaresa" is the organ of our Society, and the *Buddhist* will be published as a supplement to the above Paper. There is plenty of work to be done in Ceylon, and we would gladly welcome willing workers. I ask your sympathy and your co-operation to the good work that

we are doing for the dissemination of the life-giving and soul-consoling DHARMA of the *Tathagato*.

Invoking the blessings of the Lord, the Law, and the Order, I am ever yours, Sincerely,

DHARMAPÁAL HEVÁVITARANA,
Asst. Secretary T. S.

THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITIES.

AMERICA.

THE New York *Morning Journal*, under date of Sept. 5th, devotes three-quarters of a column to a minute description of our new Theosophical Headquarters. The account is especially interesting because of its fulness, and will doubtless draw increased public attention to the fact that Theosophy is not a visitor to, but a resident of, the West. We cannot engage to procure copies of this article, but presume that they may be ordered from the editor.

THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITY is shown in the purchases of Indian books since July. During the last three months the entire consignment of Patanjali's Yoga Philosophy and a large number of the Wilkins Edition of Bhagavad-Gita sent here by Bro. T. Tatya of Bombay have been taken up by theosophical students.

CALIFORNIA.—This coast will one day be a powerful Theosophical centre. The Branches there are active. Some theosophists in Los Angeles last month held public meetings at which theosophy and mysticism were boldly proclaimed, much to the amusement of the press, but to the profit of those who seek. Bros. J. M. and Jno. Pryse were the prime movers. The programs contained many quotations from the Upanishads, the Buddhist Suttas, and the many books due to the T. S.

IN BOSTON the project of starting a Theosophical Sunday School has been mooted. It ought to be carried forward. Members should not allow their children to go on imbibing error in sectarian schools, leaving them to the terrible task in later life of combatting the delusions now promulgated every seven days all over the land. Wake up, Theosophists! Why cannot one member with a home devote his parlor Sunday morning or afternoon, and other members bring their children and teach them Reincarnation and Karma, making the hour agreeable with music and with amusing and instructive conversation removed from the ridiculous incubus of Old Testament veiws and dogmatic christianity?

SANTA CRUZ.—The Branch here is doing well, and several new members are expected to enter this month.

THE DHARMA T. S., the lately formed Branch at Cleveland, Ohio, has decided upon semi-monthly meetings, which have now been begun.

THE CINCINNATI AND BOSTON Branches have resumed regular work.

MRS. J. CAMPBELL VERPLANCK, of Wayne, Delaware Co., Penn., has started on their way a number of circulars to various theosophists for the purpose of raising a fund for theosophical objects, such as printing and the like. Each person is asked to send ten cents and to make two copies of the circular for friends, who are in their turn to give ten cents and send the paper to other friends. This scheme has been undertaken by this lady with the approbation of the Theosophical Publication Soc. of London and the PATH. Although there has been given in the daily papers a so-called explanation of similar schemes, wherein it is asserted that the Post Office gets most of the

money, it appears that in practice the thing works well. It is yet to be seen what it will do in the ranks of the T. S. The only seemingly tenable objection to it is found in the laziness of those who would rather do anything than make the necessary copies. If the appeal shall, however, have the effect of causing some of those in the T. S. who have plenty of money to give a part of it to help the work of others who, with but little money to spare, have hitherto given it and their time freely, then the effort will not have been in vain.

IOWA.—A new Branch has been formed at Decorah, Iowa, owing to the efforts of Mrs. M. L. Brainard of the Chicago T. S., and organizes with ten members. A library for the Branch has been started, and they also have a small fund for books. We hope the T. S. Sunday School idea will take root there. The name adopted for the Society is ISIS LODGE OF DECORAH. The President is Mr. W. B. Hill. We hail it with joy and wish it success.

THE ARJUNA T. S., St. Louis, has elected as President Mr. Albert J. Stiles, (P. O. Box 518), and as Secretary Mr. Elliott B. Page, (P. O. Box 659).

ARYAN T. S., N. Y.—Bro. S. Govinda Row Sattay, of Sholapore, India, addressed this Branch in Sept., and it is his intention to aid in the work during the coming winter by visiting any other Branches who may be willing to transport him thither. The subject of his talk to the Aryan was "Jesus as a Theosophist." Any one interested in the subject of visits by Bro. Sattay may address the General Secretary, Box 2659, N. Y. P. O.

ENGLAND.

A GENERAL CONVENTION was called to meet at London on the 27th of Sept. for the purpose of confederating the European Branches into one Council. Col. Olcott came from India for that purpose, and the Executive Committee of the U. S. Council delegated Bro. Richard Harte of the Aryan T. S., who has been in London for some time, to represent America in a friendly way but with no power to vote on anything affecting our Council ; in fact he acts more in a brotherly visiting capacity than any other. After the convention Bro. Harte will leave for India on the 20th of October for the purpose of helping Col. Olcott at the Headquarters there.

CHAS. JOHNSTON, F. T. S., who has contributed valuable articles to the PATH, has entered the government service in India, and goes out on the same steamer with R. Harte.

INDIA.

THE BOMBAY THEOSOPHISTS have circulated 1,500 copies of the *Epitome of Theosophy* in and about Bombay, and 500 copies have been sent to the Hyderabad Society. Bro. Tookeram Tatya has engaged Mr. Nirbhayanand Swami as a traveling Theosophical Missionary.

SURAT T. S. has been visited by Mr. Nirbhayanand, who lectured on spiritual development and vindicated the superiority of the Wisdom Religion of the Indian Rishees. The Branch is in excellent condition.

A SANSCRIT SCHOOL has been started at Andutapur by the Vice-Pres. of the T. S. there, and is already in good condition.

And here they say that a person consists of desires. And as is his desire so is his will; and as is his will so is his deed; and whatever deed he does, that he will reap.—*Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad.*

OM!